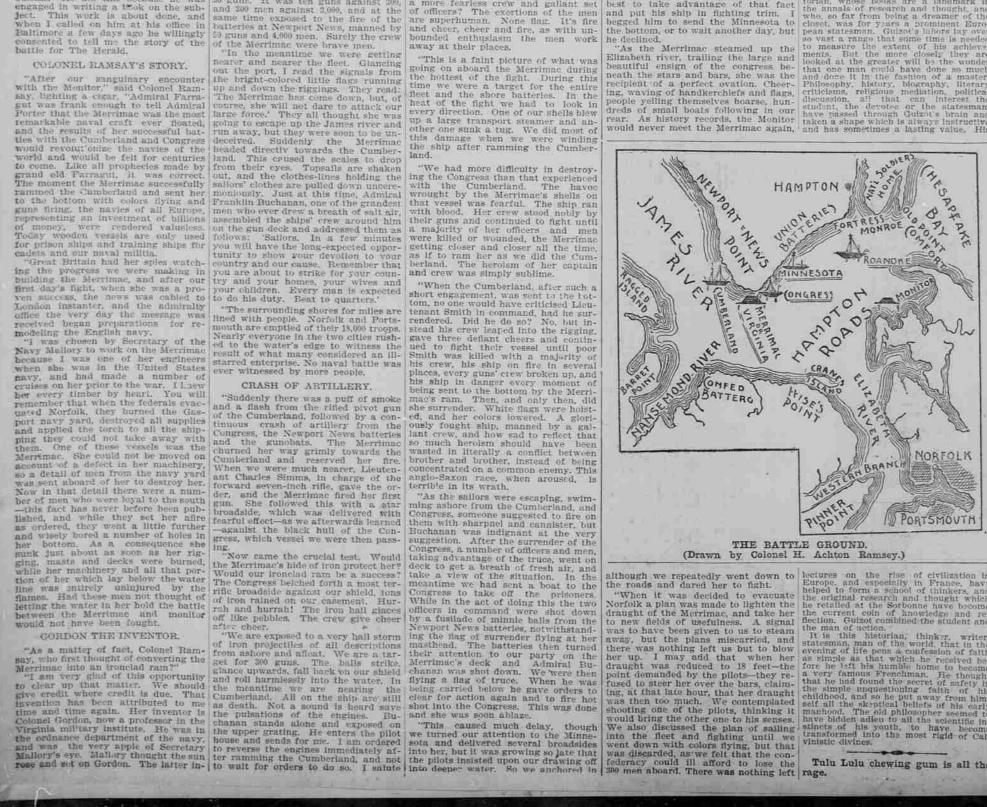


tions. My heart sank at the intelli-gence. Were we to relinquish the fruits of our victory, leave the Minnesota hard aground, where she had been for 24 hours, and return to Norfolk—to run away, apparently, for that is the way it has been since regarded. I has-tened at once on deck to interview Jones, and on my remonstrating with him for leaving without finishing the Minnesota and capturing the Monitor, he said that on consulting with some



THE BATTLE GROUND. (Drawn by Colonel H. Achton Ramsey.)

although we repeatedly went down to the roads and dared her to fight.

"When it was decided to evacuate Norlolk a plan was made to lighten the draught of the Merrimac, and take her to new fields of usefulness. A signal was to have been given to us to steam away, but the plans miscarried, and there was nothing left us but to blow her up. I may add that when her draught was reduced to 18 feet—the point demanded by the pilots—they refused to atter her over the bars, claiming, at that late hour, that her draught was then too much. We contemplated shooting one of the pilots, thinking it would bring the other one to his senses. We also discussed the plan of sailing into the fleet and fighting until we went down with colors flying, but that was discarded, as we felt that the con-

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